DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 295 246 CS 506 190

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TITLE Multinational Advertising: An Examination of Standardization and Specialization in Commercial Messages.
PUB DATE Jul 88
NOTE 38p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (71st, Portland, OR, July 2-5, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Advertising; Content Analysis; *Cultural Context; Foreign Countries; Media Research; *Television Commercials
IDENTIFIERS Audience Awareness; Consumers; International Business; *Multinational Corporations; Print Media

ABSTRACT

The issue of whether to "standardize" or "specialize" in international advertising campaigns is important because it may help determine whether each audience should be addressed separately or whether advertising agencies should attempt to address the collective global consumer. Print and television advertisements for American products appearing in the United States, West Germany, and Japan were examined to establish the extent to which standardized and specialized approaches are currently employed in international campaigns. A content analysis of American campaigns, as they appeared in West Germany and Japan, was utilized by investigating the factors influencing which approach was chosen. Findings show that (1) while individual elements were standardized in many of the advertisements analyzed, the fully standardized approach was rarely adopted; (2) messages transferred between Western nations were more likely to be standardized than those between Western and Eastern nations; (3) standardization was significantly more common in television than in print; and (4) highly standardized campaigns also contained significantly fewer information cues. (Eighteen notes and nine tables are included.) (MS)

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Multinational Advertising: An Examination of Standardization and Specialization in Commercial Messages

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A paper submitted to the AEJMC Advertising Division
July 1988

CS506 90

ABSTRACT

Print and television advertisements for American products appearing in the U.S., Germany and Japan are examined to establish the extent to which standardized and specialized approaches are currently employed in international campaigns. Factors influencing the use of either approach are investigated. While individual elements were standardized in many of the advertisements analyzed, the fully standardized approach was rarely adopted. Messages transferred between western nations were more likely to be standardized than those between western and eastern nations. Standardization was significantly more common in television than in print. Highly standardized campaigns also contained significantly fewer information cues.

In the arena of international advertising, devising advertising strategy for foreign markets is a matter of great importance. Central to the development of such strategies is the need to communicate with diverse audiences. Should each audience be addressed separately, or should the advertising agency attempt to address the collective global consumer? Questions regarding the impact of such globalization of advertising messages dominate the international advertising community. Indeed, the theme of the 1986 International Advertising Association World Congress was globalization. In current industry jargon, the issue is whether to "standardize" or "specialize" advertising campaigns for target audiences around the world.

Supporters of specialization emphasize the cultural differences that exist among nations, and either implicitly or explicitly suggest that campaigns in each country will have to take these cultural differences into account.[1] Supporters of standardization contend that differences between countries are of degree, not direction, and instead choose to focus on the similarities that are characteristic of peoples the world over. Consumers may therefore be satisfied with similar products and/or advertising messages.[2]

It has been difficult to judge the advisability of employing either a standardized or specialized approach. While the question of advertising transferability was discussed as early as 1964, even then the opinions voiced were diametrically opposed. Instead of leading the way, research and analysis in this area have not even kept pace. Far from answering the question of the

effectiveness of either approach, the research has hardly begun to define the characteristics of these two very different approaches to international advertising.

Among the few who have undertaken the limited empirical research available, Dunn sought to determine how marketing executives of large U.S. based multinational firms make decisions regarding the transfer of promotional strategy.[3] The result was a list of 31 variables selected as significant in impacting transfer decisions. A follow-up field study indicated that the proportion of companies using basically the same advertising abroad as at home was less in 1973 than in 1964. This was found to be true even in the case of cosmetics, soaps and drugs, product categories which have traditionally attempted similar image and product advertising from one country to another.[4] A Survey of U.S. international advertising managers conducted by Donnelly and Ryans found that the majority felt their non-domestic advertising had to be adapted to each country in which it appeared.[5] In contrast to the findings of these studies, which seem to indicate that relatively few advertisers have answered the call for a greater use of the standardized approach, a recent Grey Advertising study of 50 multinational marketers revealed that 72 percent believed in using the same advertising strategy worldwide.[6]

> Nearly every major U.S. multinational advertising agency is calling international executive meetings, re-examining client lists, surveying client attitudes, publishing global marketing position papers, and adding new new management layers to capitalize on the advertiser's increasing interest

in world brands and communications.[7]

In a field study of advertising transferability in Europe and the Middle East conducted in the 1960's, Dunn found that successful U.S. print advertisements reflecting a variety of themes were surprisingly transferable.[8] American ads translated into French and Arabic were found to be almost as successful as those advertisements carefully designed by creative experts of the country. Hornik, in evaluating international vs. national advertising strategies, found that product "need" universality can not imply global message appeals.[9] Testing advertisements which transferred the U.S. campaign intact as compared to messages prepared by a local agency in Israel for the same American products, Hornik found respondent differences in terms of advertising preference and recall. A study of reactions to the advertisements of two common consumer products in the U.S. and three foreign countries by Green, Cunningham and Cunningham found differences in the ways consumers viewed the importance of various product attributes.[10] The authors note that advertising messages used in France, Brazil and India should not contain the same appeals used in the U.S. if the advertiser is concerned with communicating attributes considered to be the most important for each particular market.

U.S. and Japanese magazine advertisements were analyzed by Milpacher to determine if commercial messages reflected the cultural values of a particular society, thereby suggesting the need for specialized campaigns, or whether advertisements in the

East and West are relatively similar in content for specific product categories, thus allowing for standardization of campaigns.[11] Content analysis revealed numerous differences in the appeals in the U.S. and Japanese sample, indicating differing cultural values were being reflected. However, differences observed were in degree, not in kind. Advertisements in both countries used the same ten basic advertising appeals. Hong, Muderrisoglu and Zinkham also content analyzed American and Japanese advertisements to examine how advertising expression and content differed in the two cultures.[12] Results revealed Japanese advertising employed more emotional appeals, contained significantly more information cues and employed fewer comparative techniques as compared to the U.S. sample, lending support for the authors' hypothesis that as a form of social communication, advertising may be considered particularly reflective of culture.

The research results of the above studies have done little to resolve the conflict between the staunch supporters of standardization and those who believe advertising must be worked out on a country by country basis. The purpose of this study is to begin to document current samples of international advertising to establish the extent to which it is either standardized or specialized. In addition, an attempt will be made to determine which factors influence the use of standardized vs. specialized campaigns. The study explores whether the type of audience, type of product, or medium employed influence the use of the

standardized or specialized approach. Finally, the study explores differences in message content of the two campaign approaches. The concepts central to this examination will be briefly described here.

To establish whether type of audience plays an influential role in the use of standardized vs. specialized campaigns, the concept of cultural distance, based on the Intercultural Communications Model developed by Samover, Porter and Jain,[13] is employed. Cultural distance is the degree of difference between message senders and message receivers. It is hypothesized that the greater this difference - whether social, economic, political, psychographic or demographic, the more difficult it will be for the advertiser to utilize a standardized approach. One would thus expect to find a greater usage of standardized campaigns between two countries that are quite similar (such as two Western nations) and a greater usage of specialized campaigns where the differences between countries are greater (such as between Western and Eastern nations).

Another variable expected to impact the degree of campaign specialization is product type. To determine whether this is in fact the case, consumer goods are divided into two very broad categories: major purchase items and minor purchase items. Items purchased frequently, which are low in cost, and for which there are relatively few differences between brands of the product tend to be perceived as minor purchase items by both consumers and agencies. In contrast, products viewed as major purchase items

tend to be those which are purchased relatively infrequently, are higher in cost and have perceivable differences between brands. Because of this, the risk faced by the consumer is considerably higher, and the consumer actively seeks out product information. It is hypothesized that standardized campaigns will more commonly be found in messages for minor purchase items, while for major purchase items, specialized campaigns will be more commonly found.

It is expected that the use of standardized vs. specialized campaigns varies with the medium in which the advertisement is to appear. More specifically, it is hypothesized that because of the characteristics of each of the media, standardized campaigns are more likely to be found on television, while specialized campaigns are more likely to appear in print. Television appeals to a broad audience, and the visual aspect of the medium, the time limitations (15, 30 or 60 second spots), plus the highly repetitive nature of the medium are highly amenable to the more standardized approach. The production budget is also influential. It is quite expensive to specialize television advertisements for various markets. In contrast, print advertisements tend to be targeted to a more narrowly defined audience; thus advertisements can more easily be tailored. Space limitations are not as critical a factor in the print media when compared with television. And, the cost to specialize a print advertisement for several target audiences is a good deal lower than the cost of specializing a television advertisement.

It is commonly claimed in the advertising literature that standardized or international messages are all too often "content free." Setstrup noted in his analysis of Sky Channel that television advertisements "are of little value to consumers as a source of information."[14] The study seeks to determine whether the level of consumer information differs between standardized and specialized campaigns. To explore this difference in message content, the concept of information cues, as developed by Resnik and Stern[15] will be employed. Resnik and Stern have operationally defined the following 14 information cues which represent categories of information potentially useful to the consumer: price-value, quality, performance, components or content, availability-distribution, special offers, taste, nutrition, packaging or shape, guarantees or warranties, safety, independent research, company research, and new ideas. It is hypothesized that specialized campaigns will contain a greater number of such information cues than standardized campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

Cultural Distance: To address the states hypotheses, a content analysis of U.S. campaigns as they appear in Germany and Japan was utilized. These two countries were selected because both are advanced, developed nations and are viewed as major global consumer markets. In addition, Germany and Japan represent traditionally western and eastern cultures. The researcher makes the subjective evaluation that the cultural distance between the U.S. and Germany is not as great as the distance between the U.S.

and Japan. Thus, Germany can be viewed as having consumer characteristics generally more similar to those of the U.S., while Japan can be viewed as having consumer characteristics significantly less similar to the U.S. Advertisements from both print and broadcast media were analyzed. The units for analysis are magazine advertisements and television advertisements. The population is all magazine and television advertising campaigns for U.S. products sold in Germany or Japan during the period 1985-1987.

U.S., German and Japanese advertisements were obtained by purposive sample. While this is one of the weakest forms of sampling, in this case it was necessary and unavoidable. Obtaining print or television advertisements for products sold in the U.S. and also marketed in either Germany or Japan, for a mix of major and minor purchase items, was expected to be difficult at best. This weakness is believed to be mitigated to some extent by the deliberate effort to obtain a sample representative of the population. Advertisements were collected by requesting sample campaigns from advertising agencies in the U.S., Germany and Japan, as well as from major U.S. manufacturers. Agency names were selected from the Standard Directory of Advertising Agencies. Firm names were selected from the Million Dollar Directory. Agencies and firms were informed that they would be contributing to a collection of international advertisements to be used for educational purposes in graduate and undergraduate classes. A total of 71 letters were mailed to advertising

agencies in the U.S., Germany and Japan. An additional 29 letters were mailed to U.S. firms. Table 1 outlines the pairs of advertisements for specific brands obtained via the data collection process. All Japanese advertisements were translated into English by a professional Japanese translator. German advertisements were translated into English by the researcher, who is bilingual.

Table 1 here

Major vs. Minor Purchase Items: In order to determine which of the 37 brands, for which advertisements were collected, are considered as either major or minor purchases by consumers, a nine item, five point bi-polar questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire asked respondents about the frequency with which they purchased a specific product, what impact the purchase would have on their budget, whether they collected information about the item prior to purchase, how they rated the similarity or dissimilarity among different brands, and whether they attended to commercial messages for such products. A master questionnaire was developed for each brand. Twenty five copies of each master questionnaire were prepared, for a total of 925 questionnaires (37 brands x 25 questionnaires each). Packets were prepared to include questionnaires for ten different, but randomly selected brands. A total of 86 such packets were distributed to summer school students (July 1987) at the University of Washington. Completed questionnaires totaled 851 - reflecting an average of

23 individuals responding to questions for each of the 37 brands. Means were derived for each brand. Minor purchase items are represented by lower mean scores. The higher the mean score, the more likely the average respondent was to view the product as a major purchase item. Table 2 presents the products in order from lowest to highest mean score.

Table 2 here

A natural break occurs between Gerber baby foods (2.56) and Diners Club credit card (3.0) - this reflects a jump of .44. The researcher proposes that this break distinguishes minor from major purchase items. Also, a similar break occurs between Tiffany jewelry (3.28) and Fisher VCR's (3.73). This jump in means may indicate an even higher level of major purchase items.

Degree of Standardization vs. Specialization: Coders, while viewing pairs of advertisements (U.S. and German, U.S. and Japanese) were asked to determine how similar or dissimilar the foreign advertisement was in comparison to the U.S. baseline advertisement with regard to a variety of elements. Two separate instruments were designed, in order to reflect elements unique to either the print or television medium. The questionnaire designed to determine the degree of standardization of print advertisements focused on the following elements: advertising theme, slogan, headlines, subheads, body copy, models/ spokespersons, visuals/background scenes, product attributes, product packaging, product name, and product(s) portrayed. The

questionnaire designed to determine the degree of standardization of television advertisements focused on the following elements: advertising theme, slogan, dialogue, models/spokespersons, visuals/background scenes, product attributes, product packaging, product name, music employed, and product(s) portrayed. The scales were conceptually anchored by polar opposite terms, and without spelling out the meanings of the intermediate scale points. Pairs of advertisements were presented to coders in random order. Once each element was rated, the advertising pair received an overall mean rating reflecting the degree of similarity between the messages.

Information Content in Advertisements: The 14 information categories developed by Resnik and Stern were incorporated into a questionnaire. The operational definitions of the authors were adopted. Two additional information cues were deemed valuable by the researcher. They are:

> Explicit Comparison Information: Is the product compared with other brands or are specific competing brands mentioned?
>
> Implicit Comparison Information: Is the product positioned in its class regarding some attribute, but without mentioning competing brand names?

Coders were asked to analyze each advertisement to determine the total number of information cues contained in each message. In addition, coders were asked to note the specific types of information cues employed.

Reliability: All advertisements were initially coded for number and type of information cues and degree of standardization by the researcher. In order to determine the reliability of the Resnik and Stern information classification instrument, as well as the "degree of standardization" instruments developed by the researcher, two reliability tests were administered. An intra-coder reliability or stability test was administered first. Stability, which is the degree to which a process is invariant, becomes manifest under test-retest conditions. Thus, the researcher recoded 47 percent (40) of the advertisements after a six week time lapse. Of the randomly selected individual advertisements, 97.5 percent were coded as containing the same number of information cues as initially. Of the pairs of advertisements (U.S./German and U.S./Japanese) 95 percent were coded as having the same mean similarity rating as initially.

In order to determine the degree to which this process can be recreated under varying circumstances, at different locations, and with different coders, a test of reproducibility was applied to both the information cues coding scheme and the degree of standardization coding scheme. 16 advertisements (19 percent of the sample) were selected for reanalysis via systematic sampling. Two independent coders were separately asked to view the 16 advertisements and determine the number and type of information cues in each message, and the degree of standardization between pairs of advertisements. The responses of these two coders were then compared with those of the researcher using a modification

of the Holsti reliability formula.[16] 96.5 percent inter-coder agreement was achieved for the information cues instrument developed by Resnik and Stern. This figure is understandably high, as the instrument has been refined numerous times and used extensively. 87.25 percent inter-coder agreement was achieved for the "degree of standardization" instruments. While this figure is somewhat lower than that for the information cues instrument, it is still within the acceptable range.

Statistical Analysis: Hypotheses were tested using one-way analysis of variance. "One-way analysis of variance assumes that the dependent variable is interval-level, the subpopulation variances of the dependent variable are equal, the values on the dependent variable within each subpopulation are normally distributed and the subsamples were selected by independent random sampling."[17] In effect, almost all assumptions of the inferential statistical model were violated due to two weaknesses of this study - the fact that the data were obtained via purposive sample, and the small sample size. Currently, no inferential statistics are available which circumvent the manner in which this sample was drawn. However, since the weaknesses are recognized, and since one-way analysis of variance is commonly used in applied and empirical research, its use allows comparison of the results of this study with other research in the field. In the analysis, no assumptions were made regarding the equality of the sample size in each subpopulation.

Before presenting the results, a cautionary note is in order. Due to the small sample size of this study, there is an extraordinary risk of making Type II errors. With only 85 cases, the statistical tests undertaken may not unveil statistically significant differences when, in fact, such differences may indeed exist in the population. In order to lessen the danger of accepting the null hypothesis, when in actuality it is false, confidence levels of 95 percept, as well as less stringent confidence levels of 90 percent, will be reported. In those instances where statistically significant differences are found--despite the small sample size--the researcher proposes that the relationship is particularly strong.

RESULTS

Standardization, Cultural Distance and Product Type: Table 3 presents the similarity ratings for both minor and major purchase items for U.S. and German advertisement pairs. Table 4 presents the similarity ratings for both minor and major purchase items for U.S. and Japanese advertisement pairs. The lower the similarity rating, the greater the degree of similarity (standardization) between the two advertisements. The higher the rating, the greater the difference (or specialization) between the advertisements.

Table 3 here

Table 4 here

While variation within each of the four categories (minor purchase items--U.S. and German pairs; major purchase items--U.S.

and German pairs; minor purchased items--U.S. and Japanese pairs; major purchase items--U.S. and Japanese pairs) is visible, less variation than anticipated was found between the overall similarity ratings of each. The greatest degree of standardization (lowest overall similarity rating) was found for messages between two Western nations--countries relatively close on the cultural distance scale. The mean minor purchase item similarity ratings for U.S. and German advertisements was 3.08, and 3.30 for major purchase items. In contrast, the degree of standardization was lower for messages between countries considered more culturally distant. The mean minor purchase item similarity rating for U.S. and Japanese advertisements was 3.52, and 3.42 for major purchase items. The overall similarity rating--regardless of product type for the U.S. and German advertisement pairs was 3.17; for U.S. and Japanese advertisement pairs, the overall similarity rating was 3.53. While not statistically significant, the relationships are in the direction predicted by the hypothesis.

It was hypothesized that standardization would be more common for minor purchase items than for major purchase items. As can be seen from Tables 3 and 4, this proved to be the case for U.S. and German advertisement pairs; however, in the U.S. and Japanese advertisement sample, major purchase items had a higher similarity rating than minor purchase items. This indicates that regardless of the type of product (minor or major purchase item), status as a Western or Eastern nation is more likely to play an

influential role in the degree of standardization employed between the U.S. and foreign campaigns.

Standardization and Advertising Medium: In order to explore whether standardization is indeed more common in television campaigns than in print campaigns, the mean similarity ratings for all campaign pairs were examined by the medium in which they appeared. Table 5 presents the mean similarity ratings for television and print.

Table 5 here

The difference between these means is statistically significant at the 95 percent level of confidence ($p = .04$), suggesting support for the general hypothesis that standardization of campaigns is more likely in television than in print.

Standardization and Information Content: In order to examine whether there is a correlation between the degree of standardization and the number of information cues in an advertisement, advertising pairs (regardless of whether U.S. and German or U.S. and Japanese) were selected which were considered highly standardized or highly specialized. For purposes of analysis, highly standardized campaigns are defined as those which received a similarity rating between 1.0--2.75. Highly specialized campaigns are defined as those which received a similarity rating between 4.0--5.0. Table 6 presents the number of information cues employed in highly standardized and in highly specialized campaigns, for all advertising pairs and regardless of medium.

Table 6 here

The difference in mean number of information cues employed for highly standardized vs. highly specialized campaigns is considered statistically significant at the 90 percent level of confidence ($p = .07$), lending support to the hypothesis that highly standardized advertisements contain more limited consumer information.

A closer examination of information cues in advertisements proved instructive. It was anticipated that information cues would vary with the type of product being advertised. Table 7 compares mean information cues by product type.

Table 7 here

The difference between mean information cues by product type is considered statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level ($p = .005$). Advertisements for minor purchase items, regardless of country, contained significantly fewer information cues than advertisements for major purchase items. Based on these results, the researcher felt it instructive to once again examine the relationship between standardization vs. specialization and product type. Table 8 presents the number of information cues for both highly standardized and highly specialized campaigns for minor purchase items only.

Table 8 here

The difference in mean information cues for minor purchase items for highly standardized vs. highly specialized campaigns is considered significant at the 95 percent level of confidence ($p =$

.05). Table 9 presents the number of information cues for both highly standardized and highly specialized campaigns for major purchase items.

Table 9 here

Regardless of product category, there are more information cues overall in highly specialized campaigns than in highly standardized campaigns. Even for minor purchase items, there are more than twice as many information cues in highly specialized campaigns than in highly standardized campaigns. In the case of major purchase items, while not statistically significant, the difference between means for highly standardized and highly specialized campaigns follows the predicted relationship.

DISCUSSION

Globalization of advertising has received a tremendous amount of attention in the professional journals in recent years. It has been the focus of discussions among international advertising practitioners. An overall goal of this study was to begin to document the extent to which current international advertising campaigns are in fact standardized. Considering the preoccupation of the international advertising community with globalization, it is surprising to find that of the 37 international campaigns analyzed, only two fully standardized campaigns surfaced--the U.S./Japanese television campaign for the American Express Card, and the U.S./German television campaign for Mars candy bars. Based on a sample of limited size, it appears that while some advertising elements (such as the slogan

or spokesperson) were standardized in many of the campaigns analyzed, relatively few international campaigns have adopted the fully standardized approach.

More specifically, the study attempted to determine which factors are likely to influence the use of a standardized or specialized approach. The results of this study begin to provide answers to some basic questions regarding standardization vs. specialization. Overall usage of standardized campaigns was found to be more common for messages transferred between Western nations than for messages transferred between Western and Eastern nations. It was proposed that greater standardization would be found in campaigns for minor purchase items, and greater specialization in campaigns for major purchase items. This hypothesis was not fully supported. Product type played a much lesser role than did country. Regardless of minor or major purchase items, messages transferred between the U.S. and Germany were more likely to be standardized than those transferred between the U.S. and Japan.

As hypothesized, campaign standardization was found to be significantly more common for television advertisements than for print advertisements, regardless of country. As hypothesized, highly standardized campaigns were found to contain significantly fewer information cues than campaigns defined as highly specialized. Regardless of product type, almost twice as many information cues were found in the more highly specialized campaigns. The hypothesis also holds true when examining the

number of information cues in campaigns for major and minor purchase items. The data show significantly fewer information cues in highly standardized campaigns for minor purchase items than in highly specialized campaigns for the same types of products. A similar pattern is reflected in the campaigns for major purchase items.

While not part of the initial hypotheses proposed, the data revealed an additional statistically significant relationship that warrants mention. An analysis of information cues by product type--minor vs. major purchase items--revealed significantly more information cues in the advertising messages for major purchase items. This supports the commonly held view that advertising messages for minor purchase items, such as soaps and toothpastes, tend to employ fewer rationally oriented appeals than the messages for major purchase items, such as autos and video cassette recorders.

A primary weakness of this analysis is the small sample size. An examination of only 85 advertisements--57 print and 28 television--targeted at three markets, weakens the reliability of the obtained results. The researcher does, however, believe the 85 advertisements to be representative of the population of current international advertising. As such, and because the results do support the stated hypotheses overall, the researcher encourages further exploration with a larger data base. In addition it would be of value to replicate the study using different media. Such a study might answer questions regarding

how common standardization or specialization of campaigns is for radio or newspapers. Examining different audiences would prove insightful, as well. For example, it would be of great interest to know the degree of standardization vs. specialization of campaigns being transferred to developing countries vs. those transferred to other industrialized nations.

The study would have been of greater significance had the agency rationales behind the decision to standardize or specialize been included in the analysis. A request was made for this information within the letter sent to the U.S., German and Japanese advertising agencies, as well as the U.S. firms. The large majority of agencies and firms declined to share the rationales they had developed supporting the use of either a more standardized or specialized approach, explaining that it was not agency policy to make public such information.

The primary goal of this exploratory study was to document samples of international advertising currently being transferred between nations. This is seen by the researcher as central to a better understanding of the issue of standardization vs. specialization. What this study did not address, and was not designed to address, was the effectiveness of either approach. This is a question particularly worthy of exploration. For the advertising practitioner, an understanding of which technique is more effective in terms of product or service sales is, of course, important. Of even greater consequence, in the face of ever increasing criticism of transnational advertising agencies,

is the question of how the consumer views standardized vs. specialized campaigns. Charges against transnational advertising agencies include mass manipulation, consumerism and cultural imperialism.[18] Determining whether consumers around the world view the standardization of campaigns as contributing to these criticisms is paramount. The data in the research clearly show that highly standardized campaigns contain little more than half the information of more highly specialized campaigns. Should international advertisers decide to increasingly employ standardized campaigns in the future, they may well be moving away from what is considered one of the most important functions of advertising--providing the consumer with information. And, this in turn may lead to increasing criticism of global commercial messages.

For the advertising practitioner, searching for guidelines in the planning and execution of international advertising, the results of this study provide a glimpse of the current state of international advertising: just how common standardized campaigns indeed are, in which media and for which audiences they are most likely to be employed, and how the informational content differs from that of more specialized campaigns. This glimpse should, however, be sufficient to caution the practitioner against an overly optimistic embrace of globalization in international advertising. Beyond this, the results answer only a very few of the multitude of questions a practitioner is likely to have regarding standardization vs. specialization. Yet, the study

does represent a first step in the gathering of evidence of how such campaigns are employed in international advertising in the 1980's.

Regarding the contribution of this study to advertising theory, the results clearly suggest support for the hypothesis that culture--and the degree of cultural differences between senders and receivers--plays a critical role in the decision to standardize or specialize advertising messages. It is hoped that these findings will lead to the generation of sharper, more meaningful hypotheses regarding cross-cultural commercial communications.

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Table 1. Advertising Data Base

	Pairs of Advertisements U.S./Japanese	Pairs of Advertisements U.S./German
PRINT	American Express	American Express
	Clinique	Attends Diapers
	Clinique Sun Products	Basis Soap
	Coke Light	Benson & Hedges
	Coors Beer	Camel
	Diners Club	Digital Computers
	Gerber Baby Food	Diners Club
	Johnsons Baby Oil	Fisher VCR
	Kraft Cheese	Ford Escort
	Maybelline Eye Shadow	Marlboro Cigarettes
	Tiffany Jewelry	Marlboro Lights
	Transworld Airlines	NutraSweet
	Visa	Pan American
	Welch's Juices	PostIt Note Pads
		Pepsi Light
		Transworld Airlines
TELEVISION	American Express	American Express
	Gillette Trac II Razor	Gillette Trac II
	Kellogg Corn Flakes	Kellogg Corn Flakes
	Kellogg Frosted Flakes	Kellogg Frosted
	Listerine	Mars Candy Bar
	Coca Cola	Polaroid Camera
	Esso/Exxon Gasoline	Colgate Tartar
	Delmonte Pineapple	Irish Spring Soap

Table 2. Minor vs. Major Purchase Items

Mean	Product
1.25	PostIt Note Pads
1.46	Johnsons Baby Oil
1.50	Delmonte
1.55	Camel Cigarettes
1.60	Mars Candy Bar
1.65	Marlboro Cigarettes
1.68	Welch's Juices
1.73	Gillette Trac II Razor
1.73	Kellogg Corn Flakes
1.75	Kellogg Frosted Flakes
1.76	Listerine Mouthwash
1.78	Benson & Hedges Cigarettes
1.80	Marlboro Cigarettes
1.84	Irish Spring Soap
1.88	Philadelphia Cream Cheese
1.92	NutraSweet Sweetener
2.07	Colgate Tartar Control
2.08	Coors Beer
2.09	Exxon/Esso Gasoline
2.09	Basis Soap
2.11	Diet Coke
2.17	Maybelline Eye Shadows
2.19	Attends Diapers
2.25	Clinique Sun Screen
2.25	Clinique Soap
2.37	Coca Cola
2.56	Gerber Baby Foods
3.00	Diners Club Credit Card
3.02	Polaroid Camera
3.13	Visa Card
3.16	American Express Card
3.20	Transworld Airlines
3.22	Pan American Airlines
3.28	Tiffany Jewelry
3.73	Fisher VCR
4.13	Digital Computer System
4.31	Ford Escort

Table 3. **Minor Purchase Item Similarity Ratings for U.S. and German Advertisements**

Product Pair	Similarity Rating*
Mars Candy Bar	1.00
Marlboro Cigarettes	1.62
Marlboro Lights	1.77
Colgate Tartar Control	3.00
Gillette Trac II	3.10
NutraSweet Sweetener	3.12
Kellogg Frosted Flakes	3.20
PostIt Note Pads	3.33
Benson & Hedges Cigarettes	3.33
Diet Pepsi	3.33
Kellogg Corn Flakes	3.50
Basis Soap	3.80
Irish Spring Soap	3.80
Attends Diapers	3.81
Camel Cigarettes	4.55
Mean:	3.08

Major Purchase Item Similarity Ratings for U.S. and German advertisements

U.S. AND GERMAN PAIRS

Product	Similarity Rating*
Pan American Airlines	1.77
Polaroid Camera	2.50
American Express Card (TV)	2.75
Digital Computer Systems	3.12
Fisher VCR	3.22
American Express Card (Print)	4.00
Transworld Airlines	4.11
Diners Club Credit Card	4.11
Ford Escort	4.12
Mean:	3.30

*Based on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 ("very similar") to 5 ("not similar at all").

Table 4. Minor Purchase Item Similarity Ratings for U.S. and Japanese Advertisements

Product Pair	Similarity Rating*
Johnsons Baby Oil	2.27
Coca Cola	2.60
Kellogg Frosted Flakes	3.10
Clinique Sun Screen Products	3.11
Clinique Soap	3.22
Gillette Trac II Razor	3.30
Listerine Mouthwash	3.44
Kellogg Corn Flakes	3.50
Philadelphia Cream Cheese	3.80
Delmonte Canned Pineapple	3.80
Coors Beer	3.80
Diet Coke	3.81
Gerber Baby Food	3.81
Maybelline Eye Shadow	4.10
Exxon/Esso Gasoline	4.11
Welch's Juices	4.54
Mean:	3.52

Major Purchase Item Similarity Ratings for U.S. and Japanese advertisements

U.S. AND JAPANESE PAIRS

Product	Similarity Rating*
American Express Card (TV)	1.00
Diners Club Card	3.77
Tiffany Jewelry	3.87
American Express Card (Print)	3.90
Visa Credit Card	4.00
Transworld Airlines	4.00
Mean:	3.42

*Based on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 ("very similar") to 5 ("not similar at all")

Table 5. **Mean Similarity Ratings by Medium**

Medium	Mean Similarity Rating	
Television	2.98	n = 16
Print	3.51	n = 30

(F(1,44) = 4.48; p = .04)

Table 6. Number of Information Cues in Highly Standardized and Highly Specialized Campaigns For all Products

	Product	Similarity Rating	Cues
HIGHLY	Mars Bar: US/G-TV	1.00	1
STANDARDIZED	American Express US/J-TV	1.00	2
CAMPAIGNS	Marlboro Cigarettes US/G-P	1.63	1
	Pan American Airlines US/G-P	1.78	2
	Marlboro Lights US/G-P	1.78	0
	Johnsons Baby Oil US/J-P	2.27	1
	Polaroid Camera US/G-TV	2.50	3
	Coca Cola: US/J-TV	2.60	0
	American Express US/G-TV	2.75	2

*Mean: 1.33

Table 6 (continued)

	Product	Similarity Rating	Cues
HIGHLY SPECIALIZED CAMPAIGNS	American Express US/G-P	4.00	1
	Visa: US/J-P	4.00	5
	Maybelline: US/J-P	4.10	2
	TWA: US/J-P	4.10	3
	Diners Club: US/G-P	4.11	2
	Exxon/Esso: US/J-TV	4.11	1
	Ford Escort: US/G-P	4.13	6
	TWA: US/G-P	4.22	3
	Welch's: US/J-P	4.54	2
	Camel: US/G-P	4.55	1
			*Mean: 2.60

*($F(1,17) = 3.75$; $p = .07$)

Table 7. **Mean Information Cues by Major vs. Minor Purchase Items**

Product Type	Mean Information Cues	
Minor Purchase Items	2.07	n = 59
Major Purchase Items	3.08	n = 26

(F(1,83) = 8.40; p = .005)

Table 8. Number of Information Cues in Highly Standardized and Highly Specialized Campaigns for Minor Purchase Items

	Product	Similarity Rating	Cues
HIGHLY STANDARDIZED CAMPAIGNS	Mars Bar US/G-TV	1.00	1
	Marlboro Cigarettes US/G-P	1.63	1
	Marlboro Lights US/G-P	1.78	0
	Johnsons Baby Oil US/J-P	2.27	1
	Coca Cola: US/J-TV	2.60	0
			*Mean: 0.6
HIGHLY SPECIALIZED CAMPAIGNS	Maybelline Eye Shadow US/J-P	4.10	2
	Exxon/Esso Gasoline US/J-TV	4.11	1
	Welch's Juices US/J-P	4.54	2
	Camel Cigarettes US/G-P	4.55	1
			*Mean: 1.5

* ($F(1,7) = 5.72$; $p = .05$)

Table 9. Number of Information Cues in Highly Standardized and Highly Specialized Campaigns for Major Purchase Items

	Product	Similarity Rating	Cues
HIGHLY STANDARDIZED CAMPAIGNS	American Express US/J-TV	1.00	2
	Pan American US/G-P	1.78	2
	Polaroid Camera US/G-TV	2.50	3
	American Express	2.75	2
			*Mean: 2.25
HIGHLY SPECIALIZED CAMPAIGNS	Visa Card US/J-P	4.00	5
	American Express US/G-P	4.00	1
	TWA: US/J-P	4.10	3
	Diners Club US/G-P	4.11	2
	Ford Escort US/G-P	4.13	6
	TWA: US/G-P	4.22	3
			*Mean: 3.33

*($F(1,8) = 1.25$; $p = .29$)